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The Centre of Unity

BY

CONNOP THIRLWALL

EDITED BY

JOHN E. B. MAYOR

Cambridge
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THE CENTRE OF UNITY

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

CONSECRATION OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH
LLANELLY

ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1850

BY

CONNOP THIRLWALL, D.D.
BISHOP OF ST DAVID'S

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"It is certain that there is not a country on the face of the earth whose institutions are so directly opposed to the principles laid down by the Infallible Teacher in the Syllabus as those of Great Britain. If the Pope knew anything of English history, he would say that the epoch which was the happiest and most glorious for England was that in which King John knelt before Pandulph to make himself the Pope's tributary vassal. The subversion of our present constitution ought to be the object which every faithful Romanist proposes to himself. If there are any with whom this is otherwise, it can only be the effect of ignorance, thoughtlessness, and inconsistency. No doubt the inconsistency is an amiable and honourable one. It does credit to their natural feelings, which rebel against the false teaching of their priests. But it is not the less lamentable that this discordance between their principles and their practice should be the only security they have to offer, and that in proportion as they are good Catholics they must be bad, disloyal citizens.

"From all who really love our free institutions they are now for ever separated by an impassable gulf. The Duke of Norfolk is going to pay his homage to the author of this calamity. Will he be placing himself in an enviable or honourable position? Only in the eyes of those who do not know what he is doing, which I hope may be the case with himself."—CONNOP THIRLWALL, 27 March 1871 (*Letters to a Friend*, ed. by A. P. Stanley, London R. Bentley, 1881, pp. 251—2).

I COR. I 12 13

Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptised in the name of Paul?

IT may seem at first sight, my brethren, as if these words had but little to do with the joyful occasion which has brought us together here this morning. But I am afraid that there is a very close connexion between the two subjects; so that it would hardly be possible to meditate much upon the one without having our thoughts turned toward the other. I say, I am afraid; for the subject referred to in the text is one which we should wish to banish from our minds, if by doing so we could make the thing itself cease to have a place among the realities of our being, and especially if we could shut it out of the Church of God. No doubt it was with great reluctance, with deep sorrow, that the Apostle addressed the Corinthians on this subject; though but for this, we should, at

this day, have wanted all the instruction contained in this most precious epistle. It was not a subject which he chose, but one which was forced upon him by the exigencies of the time. And perhaps it might have been reasonable to hope that what he was thus compelled to write might have saved the necessity of ever returning to the subject again; if we did not know that the evil, which he strove to repress and extirpate, is so deeply rooted in the nature of man, and springs up and spreads so fast, that it cannot be expected to disappear altogether, until He who sits upon the throne shall say, "Behold, I make all things new." And so we are not permitted to rejoice even in this glad solemnity, without being reminded of that which saddened the Apostle's heart; without remembering that the plague which he tried to stay is still raging around us, yea amongst us; without observing that the words which it drew from him eighteen centuries ago are still applicable for our admonition.

We have been engaged this morning, my brethren, in a simple but expressive rite, by which this new house of prayer has been solemnly set apart for the perpetual service—

so far as anything here may be called perpetual —of Almighty God. But the very name of the material edifice leads our thoughts at once to the spiritual building, of which it is both an emblem and an instrument; without which it would have no sanctity, no worth, no use, no title to the smallest degree of veneration or respect. We call the material and the spiritual temple by the same name; and this is well, if it serve to impress upon us the entire subordination of the one to the other, as of the body to the soul. But, according to the original and proper signification of the word, *church* means *the Lord's house;* a very fit description for a building in which the Lord's people come together, to seek His face, to honour His name, and to hear His word. This, however, is not the sense in which the word is used in the New Testament. There it always means the assembly of the faithful, whether in the narrower or the larger sense. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there was a Church. And if they were separated from one another by the distance of the poles, they might still be within the same Universal Church. And as the material fabric is a lively image of the

spiritual house, so the Universal Church is represented by each particular congregation included in it. The whole Church was once assembled within the walls of a single room. And when it had spread over the whole globe, it was still the same Church, just as the man is not a new individual, but one, in point of personal identity, with the child. And so when St Paul addresses himself, in the opening of this Epistle, to "the Church of God which is at Corinth," though he was going to discourse with them upon their own peculiar concerns, he cannot refrain from immediately noticing their intimate connexion with a larger body. "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." All had been brought into one general assembly of the Saints—the Lord's great house, with earth for its floor and heaven for its vaulted roof—all had received the same calling; all came together to call upon the same Name. No doubt the Apostle had a special motive for thus reminding the Corinthians of this more comprehensive fellowship, inasmuch as he was on the point of reproving them for not

being at one among themselves. And it was because they had been called into that fellowship that he was so deeply grieved to hear that there were divisions and contentions among them. Whatever serves to fix our thoughts on that communion, with a deep conviction of the value and importance of our relation to it, must likewise quicken our apprehension of everything which tends to weaken or disturb it. And on the other hand, whenever our attention is forcibly drawn to causes which threaten the peace and integrity of the Church, it is both natural and profitable for us that we should seek for consolation and guidance in contemplating it as an undivided whole, and in observing the conditions and the ground of its unity. Perhaps there never was a time when it was more needful to consider both sides of the subject. And the words of the text furnish abundant matter for reflexion on each. May we be enabled so to meditate upon them, that we may both enter into the Apostle's meaning, and partake in some measure of his spirit! We shall first have to inquire into the nature of those parties in the Church of Corinth to which the Apostle here alludes. Then to see how far they may serve

as a warning to ourselves. And lastly, we shall be led to observe the truth implied in the questions with which St Paul admonishes the Corinthians of their sin and their danger.

First, then, let us consider the nature of those parties in the Church of Corinth which are alluded to in my text: "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."

Now the first thing which we have to observe here is that these are not the names of false teachers, or of a false Christ. He who is last mentioned is no other than Jesus Christ our Lord. And as to those whose honoured names come before His, we know that all three held and taught the truth as it is in Jesus. I need not say a word in this respect of the two Apostles Paul and Peter, who is here designated —not probably without a special reason—by the original name, of like signification in the language of Palestine, which he received from our blessed Lord: as he is afterwards in this Epistle, where it is said that the risen Saviour "was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve." Certainly the name of Apollos is not so illustrious as these in the history of the Church.

But still there is not the shadow of a suspicion attaching to him, that, after "the way of God had been expounded to him more perfectly" than when he "knew only the baptism of John," he ever taught any unsound doctrine, and least of all that he did so at Corinth. For you will remember that we are informed in the Acts of the Apostles (chap. xviii) that when he was disposed, after his conversion, to pass from Ephesus into Achaia, of which Corinth was the chief city, and at that time the only one there in which a Christian church had been planted, the brethren at Ephesus wrote, exhorting the disciples at Corinth to receive him; and then it is added, "who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace." And you will observe that this was during St Paul's absence; for we read immediately after, that while Apollos was at Corinth, "Paul came to Ephesus." And in exact agreement with this narrative is the language in which St Paul, in this Epistle, alludes to the ministration of Apollos at Corinth. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered." And, as if

for the very purpose of removing all doubt on this point, he goes on to say: "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one." Stronger language could not have been found to show how completely St Paul acknowledged Apollos as his fellow-labourer in the Lord's vineyard, and that there was no difference between them in the substance of their teaching.

Again, it is equally certain that neither Paul, nor Apollos, nor Peter, authorised or countenanced or were at all answerable for that abuse of their names which is reprobated in the text. For St Paul, we have his own express and energetic protest. St Peter, as far as we know, never was at Corinth, or had any direct intercourse with the Corinthian Church. And as to Apollos, it is evident that St Paul could not have spoken of him as we have just heard, if there had been anything like opposition or rivalry between them. The fault, therefore, lay entirely at the door of the Corinthian parties themselves.

But farther, although there is room for much question as to the precise nature of the opinions entertained by these parties, which distinguished them from one another, it seems clear that they

did not profess any which were regarded by the Apostle as irreconcileable with the truth. They are all alike addressed and treated by him as still members of the Church at Corinth. They still continued in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship. In neither of his Epistles does he make any distinct allusion to their peculiar tenets or views; so that it is chiefly from other sources that we are able to form even a probable conjecture as to their general character and tendency. Now we may be sure that if they or any of them had fallen into any deadly error, if they had been removed unto another gospel, St Paul would not have passed it over in silence, or have contented himself with a slight and obscure hint—if he has thrown out any such—on the subject; he would undoubtedly have made it his first object, as in the case of the Galatians, to expose and refute, and condemn it. We know indeed that there was in the Church of Corinth a variety of elements which might, and indeed were sure to, furnish abundant matter for divisions and contentions. The city of Corinth itself, near to Italy, and not very remote from the shores of Palestine, was a place of great resort for strangers from the western

and eastern parts of the Roman empire. The native population was chiefly Gentile, but it also contained a great number of Jews, which was much increased after the edict of the Emperor Claudius mentioned in Acts xviii, by which all Jews were commanded to depart from Rome. It was among them that St Paul laboured during the first part of his stay at Corinth, when "he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks;" that is, Gentiles who had already become proselytes to the law of Moses. It was with them that Apollos pleaded: "for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." Even from this we may see how wide apart from one another were the points of view from which the various classes of Corinthian converts must have looked upon their new religion; how manifold were the prejudices and ways of thinking which they brought into it; differences which were not indeed irreconcileable in themselves; which might have been, and in most cases were, controlled and softened and melted into harmony by the Apostolic teaching, and under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit; but which might

also be widened and exaggerated and carried into dangerous extremes by "the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds." And we know how this was actually done in one direction from the memorable example of the churches of Galatia, in which many, if not the greater part, "had fallen from grace," "had forfeited the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," and had become "entangled again with the yoke of bondage." And if there were any in the Church of Corinth who had a leaning on this side, toward the legal Judaising view, these would be likely to shelter themselves under the name of Peter, the Apostle of the Circumcision, whom St Paul himself had been obliged on one occasion "to withstand to his face, because he was to be blamed," for giving some countenance to such errors. And then, on the other hand, we know that there were some, even at that day, "unlearned and unstable men," who "wrested the things which were taught by Paul himself to their own destruction": contending for a faith without works; pretending to grace without godliness; claiming a liberty "to continue in sin, that grace might abound." And there can be no doubt that such men would not

fail to plead, in defence of their error, the authority of Paul. Again, we find the Apostle in the beginning of this Epistle pointedly contrasting the plainness and homeliness of his own preaching with "the enticing words of man's wisdom;" the simplicity of the Gospel, the preaching of the cross, the foolishness—as he ventures to call it—of God, with the wisdom of this world: reminding the Corinthians that "when he came to them, he came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto them the testimony of God." Now we read of Apollos that he was born at Alexandria—that great seat of learning and science, where an alliance was first formed between Christian doctrine and Gentile philosophy, an alliance which became the source of some good, but also of much evil—that he was "an eloquent man," "mighty in the Scriptures, and fervent in spirit." And it is not unlikely that there were many at Corinth—particularly among the Gentile converts—who were captivated by the display of these gifts; who valued them on their own account, more than for the sake of the truths which they were employed to illustrate and enforce; who, if they possessed any measure of the like gifts themselves, were

tempted to abuse them by subtle and learned and eloquent but doubtful disputations, which tended rather to divert the minds of their hearers from the things of the Spirit of God than to promote edification; and who, while they did so, professed to be admirers and followers of Apollos.

This may serve to give some notion of the way in which these Corinthian parties may have been formed. And we see that here were the germs of many very pernicious errors. But yet it does not appear that this was the thing which St Paul most dreaded or reprobated in these divisions. It is evident that this is not the evil or the danger which he is pointing at in the text. It is not the matter of their contentions, whatever that may have been, but the contentions themselves that he so severely reproves: not even the contentions themselves, so much as the spirit in which they originated and were carried on, and the manifold bitter and poisonous fruits of that spirit; for this was the common source of all the disorders which disfigured and afflicted the Church, and which are the subject of the whole Epistle. What then was that spirit? The spirit of the carnal mind; that

mind which is "enmity against God, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So the Apostle distinctly informs the Corinthians: "Ye are yet carnal," he says, "for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" that is to say, in your own natural light and strength, not seeking for the guidance and support of the Holy Spirit. "For," he proceeds to say, "while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" You see he repeats the language of our text, as if he could find none more expressive, to describe that which he considered as the clearest proof of their carnal-mindedness. And therefore we must look more closely at the words themselves, that we may understand the precise nature of the things implied in them.

Now the first thing which appears to be plainly implied in the language attributed to the Corinthian parties, is the setting up of a human authority in matters of religion, and the unduly exalting it, to the disparagement and exclusion of others; and next, a disposition to render an improper kind of homage and subjection to it. It must be observed that there is

nothing to determine the exact degree in which all this was done. Only we are sure that it was already carried to an extent which St Paul thought highly blameable, and that it had begun to produce most hurtful consequences. No doubt such language might have been used, and possibly was used at first, in a sense perfectly innocent, and which the Apostle himself would have approved of. For so he even exhorts them in this Epistle, "Be ye followers of me"; but then he immediately adds, "even as I also am of Christ": not farther or otherwise: treading in my steps, as I tread in the steps of Christ. He was very far indeed from wishing that they should pay no reverence or submission to their spiritual pastors and fathers in Christ; as he writes to the Hebrews: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." But then, if this had been done in a right spirit, there could have been no such language among them as "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas." Paul and Apollos and Peter would all have had their share of esteem and honour from each. No one of the three would have been singled out by any as the object of exclusive veneration. But as soon

as this was done, there was no saying to what length this deference to the chosen authority might be carried. It might lead to an absolute surrender of the reason and conscience of individuals; and this was the more likely to happen, the longer it continued to be professed as the badge of a party.

Here, then, were two things implied in the use of these names as party watchwords; the assigning of an undue pre-eminence to a single human authority, with an uncandid depreciation of others which were entitled to equal respect; and the tendency to a sinful renunciation of personal freedom and responsibility. Another thing which was equally implied in the language, and which was still more evident in its immediate and visible consequences, was a feeling of mutual estrangement, a narrow, uncharitable, intolerant spirit, which would lead each party to shut out from its pale, and virtually to degrade and condemn, all who refused to acknowledge the same authority which it had set up for itself; each to treat the rest as if it had no connexion with them, no dependence on them, no concern for them. This is what the Apostle so forcibly illustrates by his comparison

with the members of the body: "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." Could living and sound members of the Church use language which signified that they had as little sympathy with one another? That each regarded itself as a complete and independent whole? And from this we see again what was the real though hidden root of the evil; how that show of humility was only another form of pride; that voluntary subjection only an exercise of an arrogant and domineering self-will.

But it may seem as if we had forgotten that there was yet another party, whose language has a very different sound; one which proclaimed, "I am of Christ." What shall we say of this? Are we to suppose that they who spoke thus meant simply to rebuke and admonish the rest? To remind them that "one was their master, even Christ, and all they brethren"; and that "there was none other name under heaven given among men, whereby they must be saved?" No doubt the words taken by themselves would have seemed to intimate this. But when we connect them with the context, we must see at once that

it is impossible to understand them in this sense. It is plain that they were used in a sense which either was not only innocent but praiseworthy; or else deserved the severest censure. But there can be no doubt as to which of these was the view that the Apostle took of them. He evidently numbers those who held this language among the other parties, without any hint of an exception or distinction in their favour; and therefore he must be considered, not only as including them under the same condemnation, as among the authors of the divisions and contentions which he deplores, but as more particularly pointing to them in the expostulation which immediately follows: "Is Christ divided?" If the others had sinned by bowing too low before human authority, and erecting it into a barrier which separated them from their brethren, these sinned far more deeply in arrogating to themselves an exclusive title and relation to Christ. All the pride, all the self-will, all the uncharitableness, which were indicated by the other denominations, were still more offensively conspicuous in this. This denoted the utmost extreme to which the spirit of party could carry any of the rest. One who said, "I am of Paul,"

did not deny, though he might seem to forget, that the others at least were of Christ. But he who so emphatically proclaimed, *I* am of Christ, seemed to pass sentence on the rest, as unworthy of communion either with Christ or with himself. If one party assumed such an invidious distinction, what was to prevent others from doing so too? And then must it not seem as if Christ was divided? As if there were many Christs instead of one? And when the unbelieving world heard and saw this, would it not ask, in doubt or derision like Pilate, Which is the true Christ?

Still, we must remember that, when St Paul wrote, the evil was only in its germ and first beginning; and he wrote to prevent it from growing and spreading. He no doubt clearly perceived its nature and tendency; and he saw that it had already greatly disturbed the peace and corrupted the purity of the Church at Corinth. He was aware that the same spirit of party, which was the origin of their divisions and contentions, had also produced the other mischiefs and scandals—the relaxation of discipline, the indulgence of fleshly lusts, together with the opposite extreme of ascetic rigour,

tending toward the forbidding of marriage, the desecration of ordinances—as in the administration of the Lord's Supper—the abuse of spiritual gifts, the confusion and irreverence in public worship, the greediness and hard-heartedness toward the poor, the worldly-mindedness and proneness to litigation even before heathen tribunals, the introduction of strange doctrines, calling in question even the resurrection from the dead—which he enlarges on in this Epistle. But he could not foresee or imagine all the fatal consequences which were to flow from this source, and to overspread the Universal Church of Christ. We, my brethren, have had a much larger and longer experience, and looking around us, and back into the past, guided by the light of history through eighteen centuries, are better able than the Apostle himself to estimate the magnitude of the evil against which he raised his voice in the earliest stage of its progress. Toward whatever quarter of the Christian world we turn our eyes, we observe both sad tokens of its actual presence, and fearful traces of its destructive ravages in time past. The peculiar forms of those divisions and contentions which weakened and dishonoured the

Church of Corinth have indeed so completely passed away, that it is with some difficulty, and with a faltering hand, that we are able to trace even a faint outline of them. But their essential character, in all the main features which I have been attempting to describe, has been preserved to this day in other forms, and in immensely enlarged proportions, and a violently aggravated spirit. Let us call to mind what those features were. We noted three points, as included, if not in the actual manifestation, at least in the ultimate tendency of the Corinthian parties—the undue exaltation of a human authority, the surrender of reason and conscience to such authority, and the uncharitable exclusion and condemnation of all who refused to submit to it. I am afraid, my brethren, that the spirit which displays itself by these tokens is to be found, more or less, and everywhere too much, in all the religious communities into which those who bear the name of Christ are partitioned at this day. The names are new, but the thing is the same. It is no longer "I am of Paul" and "I am of Apollos"; but, I am of Luther, and I of Calvin, and I of Socinus, and I of Wesley, and more, whom it is needless to enumerate.

Perhaps it may be thought that I am speaking as a Churchman if I say that there is much of the Corinthian spirit in all these modern parties. I know that the Dissenter complains of it in the Church of England, quite as much as the Churchman, in any of the sects which have seceded from her. I am afraid there is too much ground for the complaint on both sides. I am afraid that we have all much cause for humbling and taking shame to ourselves in this matter; and that many have need to cast out the beam out of their own eye before they can see clearly to cast out the mote out of a brother's eye. But still, unless we are utterly blind, we cannot confound the mote with the beam. The same spirit may manifest itself in various degrees, some of them so widely removed from one another that it is impossible for the most careless observer to overlook the difference between them. Now, if the question was, In which body of Christians the three tendencies above described have been unfolded to the greatest extent? among whom it is that a human authority is exalted to the most sovereign pre-eminence? among whom the rights of conscience and the obligations of personal responsibility have been most abso-

lutely repudiated and sacrificed? among whom intolerance, both in principle and practice, has been carried to the most extravagant excess?—I believe not only that there would not be a moment's hesitation in anyone here present, to whatever denomination of Christians he may belong; but that no assembly of intelligent men could be found in which the like answer would not immediately present itself to every mind, namely, that it is the body which says, "I am of Peter."

My brethren, if it had been given to St Paul to pierce with prophetic eye through the long vista of ages which separates his time from ours, and to foresee in what sense and under what circumstances men would continue to say, "I am of Peter," it is hard to determine which aspect of this mournful history would have filled his soul with deeper emotions of astonishment, shame, and grief. It would no doubt have appeared to him marvellous enough that his brother Peter, Peter whom he had withstood to his face, because he was to be blamed; Peter, to whom he would not allow any degree of authority which might not be as rightfully claimed by himself; Peter, who had himself

admonished his fellow-elders not to carry themselves "as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock"; that Peter, I say, should ever be supposed, not only to have possessed, but to have transmitted to others, a title to absolute dominion over the whole Church of Christ; that each of his pretended successors should receive divine honours, should be adored upon the altar, should be solemnly proclaimed Vicar of Christ, Ruler of the World, should be acknowledged as Lord of Lords, as the Almighty, the Infallible, as Vicegerent of God, as God upon earth, as our Lord God;—this, I say, would have appeared to St Paul marvellous enough. And yet I venture to think that even this awful blasphemy would not have been the thing which would have excited in him the highest degree of amazement and horror. I believe that he would have shuddered still more if he had contemplated the means by which this usurped dominion was maintained and propagated, the manner in which it was exercised, and the ends which it was made to serve. And even among these, would it have been the violence of persecution, the rivers of innocent blood, the dark and loathsome dungeons, the instru-

ments of lingering torture, the manifold forms of agonising death, by which this unrighteous sovereignty was enforced, from which he would have turned away with the deepest abhorrence? Or would it have been that this cruel tyranny, exercised in the name of Christ, was employed to supersede Christ's religion by another Gospel, to set up other mediators in Christ's stead, to make Christ's Word a dead letter, and to replace it with the traditions and inventions of men: to decree new articles of faith, to impose doctrines of which Paul never heard, and which, if he had known, he would have withstood even to the death? I believe not so. For he would have had before his eye something still worse than this. He would have seen these attributes of Omnipotence assumed for still more unhallowed ends: to do that which, with reverence be it spoken, God Himself could not do: even to subvert the first principles of truth and justice, to confound the eternal distinctions of right and wrong, to sever the most sacred ties by which society is knit together, to stifle the voice of reason and conscience, to make evil good and good evil, darkness light and light darkness.

There are persons who view this system with

less alarm and aversion than it deserves for two reasons: first, because in this country the spirit of persecution, however violently it may still rage in men's hearts, is happily restrained by law in its outward manifestation, and, at the utmost, can only indulge itself in bitter words, in slander and invective and insult. And again, in this Protestant land, the grossest enormities of the system are so disguised and softened down, that there is reason to hope there are many of its professed adherents to whom they are scarcely known, and over whom they exert hardly any practical influence. This I am most willing to admit: and I wish it to be generally understood and borne in mind; for it will help us to cherish kind feelings toward those whose religion, considered in itself, we cannot but regard with dread and abhorrence. But these facts, however true and important in their place, do not in the slightest degree affect the essential character and invariable tendency of the religion itself. Whatever changes it may undergo in its outward aspect, whatever variety of forms it may develope, still, so long as the principle of an omnipotent infallible authority is retained—and it was never asserted more boldly than at

this day—the spirit of the religion must continue the same; and each new addition is bound upon every conscience as tightly as any article of its original creed.

This, my brethren, is the yoke which our forefathers cast off by a hard-fought struggle some three hundred years ago, and which the See of Rome is now hoping and striving again to fasten on our necks. And what chiefly encourages her in this undertaking is, that those who are in principle equally opposed to her, are unhappily divided among themselves. The See of Rome justly regards the Church of England as her chief and most formidable adversary, as the main bulwark of Protestant faith. Let this be once overthrown, she believes that her triumph will then be sure, and that she will speedily erect her own dominion upon its ruins. And therefore the object which her emissaries and champions in this country are labouring most strenuously to compass, by all the insidious artifices of rhetoric and sophistry, is to induce those who have separated from us—chiefly on the ground that we have not, as they think, been sufficiently decided and thoroughgoing in our opposition to her—to stand aloof

and remain neutral in the contest which we are now waging with her; yea, to second her efforts and sanction her claims; yea, to represent her cause as their own—as the cause of religious liberty, and of the rights of conscience. And it is mournful and humiliating to see, as we do, that they have to no inconsiderable extent been successful in this attempt. It is not, indeed, the first time that she has practised this device. She tried it nearly two centuries ago; but then, happily, it failed, because the spiritual ancestors of those who are now unwittingly abetting her designs, were at length keen-sighted enough to discern and avoid the snare. To that failure, through the blessing of Providence, we owe our Protestant Throne, our Reformed Church, and our free institutions, under the shelter of which her own adherents, as well as those whom she is now persuading to take her part in this struggle, have enjoyed the largest measure of religious liberty consistent with the maintenance of the Constitution, and with the dignity and independence of the State.

In a certain sense, indeed, she has a right to any benefit which she may reap from our unhappy divisions; for it is the fruit of seed which

she herself has sown. For to her insatiable ambition, to her intolerant and intolerable despotism, may be traced almost all the divisions which have distracted the Church of Christ throughout the world: first, the great schism which sundered the Eastern from the Western Church; then the manifold breaches which were the almost inevitable consequence of the convulsive efforts made at the Reformation to shake off the galling yoke of the ancient bondage, the strife engendered by the natural abuse of the newly recovered liberty; and the violence of party spirit, which was fostered and inflamed by her own wily and unscrupulous emissaries, who for that purpose were permitted to put on the mask of Protestant zeal. Nor may we hope that the effects will wholly pass away, so long as the cause remains in unabated operation. But it is time to conclude with a few words of warning, and comfort, and exhortation.

The first warning which I would offer is this: that we should not seek a delusive comfort by shutting our eyes to the evil of those divisions which actually afflict the Church of Christ: that we should not accustom ourselves to consider them as a state of things in which we may

rightly acquiesce and rest content, without any desire and endeavour to better it. Is there any thinking man who, upon calm reflexion, can be of opinion that the present condition of the Christian world agrees in this respect, in any tolerable measure, with that which St Paul described, when he addressed the Corinthians in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement"? Or shall we say that the Apostle was in error; that he over-rated the blessings of unity, peace, and concord, and laid too much stress on the duty of striving to attain them? My brethren, let us not so deceive ourselves. Though we may not see either how this unhappy state of things is to be rectified, or what we can do to promote that object; still let us not shrink from looking the evil in the face, nor from viewing it in its true light; and let us never cease to long and pray, and, as far as in us lies, labour for its final extinction.

But, on the other hand, let us beware of applying a remedy which would be worse than

the disease. Great as is the evil of division, let us be sure that it is incomparably less than that of such a spurious, hollow, artificial unity as is held out by the See of Rome; unity purchased by the subjection of reason and conscience to the arbitrary decrees of a self-styled infallible human authority. If we, my brethren, were at liberty to use such language as that of the Corinthian parties, our Church would have better reason for saying, "I am of Paul," than "I am of Peter." For we have some ground for ascribing the first introduction of Christianity into this island to the labours of St Paul, but none whatever for believing that St Peter was at all concerned in it, either directly or indirectly. But, whoever was the honoured instrument of conveying to us so great a blessing, we should owe him gratitude and reverence, not devoted allegiance and absolute submission. We would be followers both of Paul and Peter, but only even as they also were followers of Christ. Not Paul or Peter is the rock on which our Church is built; rather on Paul's faithful preaching, and on Peter's true confession; but still more properly on Him to whom both bore witness. To Him let us cleave as the only solid ground and living

centre of unity. So long as we hold stedfastly to that, we need not be disheartened or perplexed because others, who build on the same foundation, differ from us in some particulars of their plan. Let us judge nothing before the time. Perhaps we might still come to a better understanding if we were more willing to see, and own, and honour, and love, whatever is good in the work even of those who differ from us most widely. In the meanwhile we might commit our own work in humble confidence to the Lord of the building, trusting that it may be approved by Him, when it shall be made manifest at that day. And we may hope that, in His own good time, He may yet be pleased to combine the divided services of all the builders in some new and wonderful order, that each may find its place in the execution of His great design, and may serve to complete the many mansions of His Father's house.

THE END

NOTES

The late Master of Trinity, William Hepworth Thompson, once bade me note the policy of 'Oxford men' towards Thirlwall. Unable to answer him, they let him severely alone. Much the same may be said of Julius Charles Hare. Fifty or sixty years ago young scholars here were kept true to the principles of the Reformation chiefly by the writings, charges, sermons, etc., of these two friends. Their influence was purely intellectual and moral. They founded no party organ, fostered no panics. Very few of their followers knew them by sight. But we learnt to keep aloof from party cries and slander. Unhappily we have no life of Hare, and a very meagre one of Thirlwall. His correspondence with R. M. Milnes (Lord Houghton) through many years was burnt, and with it the best material for the writer's life and for the history of contemporary letters and religion in England.

I cannot find where I printed, shortly after Thirlwall's death, a list of materials for his life. I have since collected the following: *Guardian* newspaper 9 Aug. 1875 p. 1031 and leading article. Inscription on his tomb *N.* & *Q.* 5 S. IV 438. Part of his library sold by Puttick and Simpson 22—24 July 1874 (Catalogue of theological, classical, philological and miscellaneous books, including a selection from the library of an eminent dignitary of the church). Geschichte von Griechenland. Bonn 1839 1840. 2 vols. Histoire des origines de la Grèce par A. Joanne. Paris 1852. Criticised by Léo Joubert, Essais de critique et d'histoire. Paris, Didot, 1863, p. 8. Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary III 360, 404, 478. Harold Browne's Life, index and p. 88, 105—107, 152, 308. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth's Life[2] 26. Bishop Colenso's Life II 127, 153. Leonard Blomefield (Jenyns) Chapters in my life (1889) 62—3. Adam Sedgwick's Life I 374, 436—8, II 277—8. John Morgan, Four biographical sketches (London, Elliot Stock). *Times* 28 July 1875. Annual Biography 1828 p. 470. Biographical

Dictionary of Living Authors, 1816. *Spectator* 10 Aug. 1861 p. 866 b.

The sermon here reprinted, and the tracts (not the less interesting because their argument has triumphed) on the nationalisation of the Universities, are omitted in the following: Connop Thirlwall: Remains literary and theological, edited by J. J. Stewart Perowne. I Charges (1842—60). II Charges (1863—72). London, Daldy, Isbister & Co. 1877. III Essays, speeches, sermons, etc. *ibid.* 1878. Letters literary and theological of Connop Thirlwall, edited by J. J. Stewart Perowne and Louis Stokes, with annotations and preliminary memoirs by Louis Stokes. London, Richard Bentley, 1881. Letters to a friend by Connop Thirlwall, edited by A. P. Stanley. *ibid.* 1881.

I recall 'The Centre of Unity' to life because it continues the tradition of Jewell and Hooker, of Jeremy Taylor and Isaac Barrow. It was preached four years before the proclamation of the Immaculate conception of Mary, fourteen years before the Syllabus, twenty years before the Vatican 'council'; yet every thoughtful hearer must have been prepared for each and all of these developments by the grave warnings of the preacher.

English Churchmen are bound to help all movements of reform in the Vatican communion, not only by the threatening presence of a common enemy, but by the wrong done to the Western Church by deserters from our ranks. Sixty or seventy years ago 'Catholicism' in Germany was tolerant and true to its name. Catechisms and professors alike rejected the Pope's claim to infallibility. To F. W. Faber and his 'Devotion to the Pope' (1860) was largely due the substitution over Europe of a false centre of unity, 'The idol in the Vatican' (Montalembert) for the One Lord of Thirlwall and St Paul.

Again, there never was a time when (with few exceptions, notably Dr Salmon) Protestantism was so ill represented in the national church as now. We need another Hooker to warn us against denouncing any usage not as wrong in itself, but as found at Rome. The Henry Bradshaw Society is to be boycotted,

because forsooth the Vatican subscribes for its books. Probably Bishop John Wordsworth's Vulgate, Dr Hatch's Concordance to the LXX, and the facsimile of Codex Bezae deserve the same fate on the same ground. Sôme folk will not believe S. R. Maitland's own assurance that he was not a crypto-Papist.

Conversions to Rome amongst the high-born and the rich convict us of sloth. Shrewd renegades, we may fairly take for granted, never learnt the scope of the Syllabus, nor the success of the 'Leo-Taxil' swindle, the most astounding hoax on record, a keen satire on papal infallibility.

Christopher Wordsworth, the poet's brother, wisely inserted in his *Christian Institutes* (IV², Rivington, 1842) as 'Polemical Theology,' extracts from Jewell, Hooker, Casaubon, Sir E. Sandys, Overall, Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, South, Sanderson, bearing on the contest with Jesuitism. Nothing of the kind is now placed in Anglican hands. Of our countrymen probably the Presbyterian clergy, who study in Germany, are now best equipped for this warfare, from which no patriot should flinch.

I note a few books dealing with the questions at issue:

Karl Hase: Handbuch der protestantischen Polemik gegen die römisch-katholische Kirche.[6] 1894. A model of courtesy and well-digested learning.

Paul Tschackert: Evangelische Polemik gegen die römische Kirche. Gotha, F. A. Perthes. 1885.

Friedrich Nippold: Welche Wege führen nach Rom. Heidelberg, 1869.—Handbuch der neuesten Kirchengeschichte. I³ Elberfeld, R. L. Friderichs. 1880. II³ *ibid.* 1883.—Katholisch oder Jesuitisch. Leipzig, 1888.—Kleine Schriften zur inneren Geschichte des Katholizismus. Jena, Costenoble. 1899. I Aus dem letzten Jahrzehnt vor dem Vatikankonzil. II Abseits vom Kulturkampf.—Der religiöse Friede der Zukunft und seine Anbahnung durch die altkatholische Kirche. Leipzig, Carl Braun. 1901.

Graf von Hoensbroech: Das Papsthum in seiner sozial kulturellen Wirksamkeit. I. Inquisition, Aberglaube, Teufels-